

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the above amendments and the following comments. New claims 31- 36 represent the objected-to but otherwise allowable claims rewritten in independent form. No new matter has been added, and no new issues have been raised. Claims 11-30 have been cancelled without prejudice.

Applicant is unable to find any evidence in his file that the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) which was submitted on February 1, 2001 and received by the USPTO on February 5, 2001, as evidenced by a date-stamped postcard, was considered by the Examiner. As this IDS was submitted prior to the first Office Action on the merits, this IDS is entitled to be considered by Patent Office under 37 C.F.R. 1.97(b). Applicant, therefore, requests that this IDS be considered and that the initialed Form PTO-1449 be returned with the next action from the Examiner.

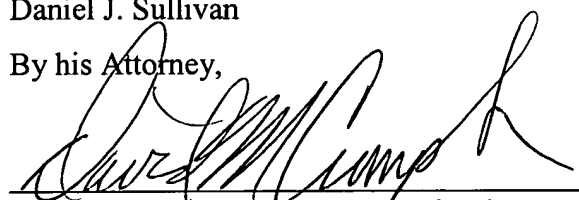
Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejection of claims 11-12, 15-20, 23-24 and 27-30 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by Gambale et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,922,924. Claims 11-30 have been cancelled without prejudice, thereby rendering the rejection moot. Applicant does not concede the correctness of the rejection.

Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested. It is respectfully submitted that all pending claims, namely claims 31-36, are now in condition for allowance. Issuance of a Notice of Allowance in due course is requested. If a telephone conference might be of assistance, please contact the undersigned attorney at (612) 677-9050.

Respectfully submitted,

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By his Attorney,



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Version with Markings to Show Changes Made

In the Claims:

Claims 11-30 have been cancelled.